

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: <b>Serving the Family</b>
<b>CHILD CARE</b>	Subject: <b>Co-payment Requirements</b>

**Supersedes:** Child Care 6-4 (7/01/03)

**References:** Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA;  
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302,  
37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM  
45 CFR Part 98

**General Rule:** Each family receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship pays part of the cost of child care. Each family is obligated to pay a co-payment to their child care provider by the end of the service month. The co-payment is based on their family size and gross income as illustrated on the Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale as outlined in Section 1-5.

The required co-payment is considered the initial down payment for the child care scholarship each month. A family loses eligibility for further child care scholarships if they do not pay the co-payment, or make satisfactory arrangements with their child care provider.

*NOTE: There is no co-payment obligation when the reason for care is CPS.*

**Cost of Care is Less than the Co-payment** If the month's cost of child care is less than the monthly co-payment obligation, the family is obligated to pay only the cost of care, not the full co-payment indicated on the child care certification plan.

**More Than One Provider** There are times when a parent may need to use two or more child care providers. In these circumstances, the CCR&R should attach the family's co-payment to the provider, which does the majority of the care. In the case where two providers provide an equal amount of care, the parent may choose which provider should receive the co-payment. If the child, for some reason, does not attend the primary facility during a month, then the co-payment will default to the secondary provider

**Disputed Co-payments** Parents who fail to pay their co-payment by the end of the service month will lose the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship until the co-payment is paid.

Montana Department of  
Public Health & Human Services

Section:  
**Serving the Family**

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Subject:  
**Co-payment Requirements**

The child care provider indicates the amount of co-payment received on the monthly invoice.

For the purposes of determining a family's eligibility for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, the first payment(s) made to the provider will be counted toward satisfying the parent's co-payment obligation. Any other unpaid fees (over-and-above rates, late charges, etc.) are not considered for the purpose of maintaining the parent's eligibility for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship and are solely the responsibility of the parent and the provider.

### **Notice of Unpaid Co-payment**

Parents receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship shall pay their co-payment by the end of the service month. If the parent does not pay their co-payment or make satisfactory arrangements with their provider, the CCR&R Specialist shall:

- ⇒ Request verification within 10 days, notifying the parent and provider.
  - ⇒ Provide notice to the parent and provider 10 days before case closure.
  - ⇒ The parent has until the closure date to verify that they have paid the required co-payment.
  - ⇒ If verification of payment (or satisfactory arrangement) is not received, close the case.
  - ⇒ Case note.
- ❑ If the family provides written verification from their provider that they have paid the co-payment by the deadline, the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may continue.
  - ❑ If the parent does not provide written verification by the deadline, the eligibility specialist shall close the scholarship. Fair Hearing rights are included on the closure notice. The CCR&R shall notify the provider the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is closed.
  - ❑ If the parent pays their co-payment after the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is closed, the family may be eligible beginning on the day the co-payment was paid or verified, under the following conditions:
    - Eligibility must be re-determined; and

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- Child Care and Development Funds must be available.

**Satisfactory  
Arrangements in  
Lieu of Cash Co-  
payment**

A parent may compensate a child care provider with goods or services in lieu of paying the co-payment in cash. The child care provider indicates their satisfaction with the arrangement by marking the co-payment as paid-in-full on the monthly invoice.

